

The seven hundred and ninety-third Meeting of the Club was held in the Senior Common Room, Sherfield Building, Imperial College on Thursday, 14 December 1989 at 7 p.m. 30 members and 18 guests were present.

Members attending were: R. E. F. PEAL (*Chairman*), Miss H. BAKER, B. H. BECK, P. BELMAN, Mrs D. M. BRADLEY, K. F. BETTON, P. BULL, Cdr M. B. CASEMENT, RN, I. D. COLLINS, P. CONDER, Dr R. A. F. COX, S. J. FARNSWORTH, D. FISHER, A. GIBBS, D. GRIFFIN, R. P. HOWARD, R. KETTLE, J. KING, Dr J. F. MONK, A. G. MOORE, Mrs A. M. MOORE, R. MORGAN, P. OLIVER, A. J. RANDALL, Dr R. C. SELF, Dr D. SNOW, N. H. F. STONE, Dr D. H. THOMAS, J. J. WHEATLEY, M. WOODCOCK.

Guests attending were: Dr B. KING (*Speaker*), Dr J. BRADLEY, Dr R. CHANDLER, Mrs F. FARNSWORTH, Mrs S. GRIFFIN, D. HARRIS, Ms C. HOFF, Ms L. HOGAN, Mrs R. HOWARD, Dr A. MELLAND, P. J. MOORE, Mrs M. OLIVER, R. RANFT, Mrs B. K. SNOW, Mr I. THOMAS, D. TOMLINSON, Mrs D. TOMLINSON, Mrs B. J. WOODCOCK.

After supper Dr Ben King gave an account, illustrated with many of his slides, of travelling in Sichuan Province during his expeditions to China since 1980.

Notes on Philippine birds, 15.

First record of the Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva* for the Philippines

by R. Y. McGowan & J. S. Pritchard

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The Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva* is recorded as breeding throughout Asia from the Baltic to the Pacific coasts (Medway & Wells 1976), as a winter migrant to China, the entire Indo-Chinese peninsula, Tibet and India (Vaurie 1959, Dement'ev & Gladkov 1968) and as a scarce migrant to the Malay Peninsula (Medway & Wells 1976). Smythies (1981) describes the species as a rare vagrant in Borneo with most reports coming from coastal areas in the north of the island. There is no report of this species in duPont's (1971) work on Philippine birds.

During a faunal survey (carried out by JSP) along the margins of primary forests on Palawan Island, Philippines, a specimen of *Ficedula parva* was collected by mist-netting on 8 December 1988. The nets were located in the understorey of fragmented, lowland riparian forest by the Panitian River between the Nali Dam and Dumalag at c. 70 m above sea level. The specimen was provisionally identified as a first winter female, this being later confirmed by comparison with reference material in the collections of the National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh, where it is now deposited (specimen no. NMSZ 1989.021.11). The sooty black upper tail coverts are diagnostic of the eastern race *F. p. albicilla* (Vaurie 1959) and the specimen agrees with others of this race from Burma and China held in the NMS.

Measurements (mm) are: body length 121, wing 68, tail 50, tarsus 17, which closely agree with those given by Dement'ev & Gladkov (1968). Fresh weight of the bird was 10 g. This is apparently the first record for the Philippines.

Although Red-breasted Flycatchers have not so far been recorded from Taiwan (King *et al.* 1975) it would be wrong to conclude that the birds from Borneo and Palawan must therefore have crossed the South China Sea. It remains a possibility that migration through Taiwan, Palawan and Borneo takes place, albeit on a small scale.

The increased observer effort in the Philippines over the past few years (e.g. Kennedy *et al.* 1986) has resulted in an increase in the number of species recorded in these islands; further investigations could well show that some of the species currently classed as rare migrants and vagrants do, in fact, occur regularly in small numbers. As pointed out by White (*in* White & Bruce 1986) for Wallacea, Palearctic migrants have generally been neglected, since collectors have concentrated on indigenous and montane birds, and few residents study the birds or make field observations.

References:

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On the possible former breeding of the Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus* in Algeria

by E. D. H. Johnson & S. J. Farnsworth

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Based on his examination of eggs originally in the Tristram Collection and now in the British Museum (Natural History), Walters (1988) lends support to the statement by Loche (1867) that the Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus* bred in Algeria in the mid-19th century, an assertion dismissed by Heim de Balsac & Mayaud (1962) and ignored by recent authors other than Ledant *et al.* (1981) who draw attention to the formers' opinion.